

BOEM Advances Offshore Wind in Major U.S. East Coast Energy Market

Agency Announces New York Bight Wind Energy Areas and Initiates Environmental Review. Seeks Public Comment.

03/29/2021 Washington, DC

Contact(s)
Stephen Boutwell
(202) 679-3438

The Bureau of Ocean Energy Management (BOEM) today identified nearly 800,000 acres as Wind Energy Areas (WEAs) in the New York Bight, between Long Island and the New Jersey coast. The agency will now initiate an environmental review, with public input, on these areas in federal waters for potential offshore wind leasing.

The announcement came during a White House forum in which Secretary of the Interior Deb Haaland, and the Secretaries of Energy, Commerce, and Transportation, met with representatives from states, the offshore wind industry, and members of the labor community to identify challenges and solutions facing this new industry. The event included a commitment by Interior and the Departments of Energy and Commerce to establish a target to deploy 30 gigawatts (30,000 megawatts) of offshore wind by 2030, creating nearly 80,000 jobs.

"Interior is working with agencies across the federal government to advance the Biden-Harris administration's goal of increasing renewable energy development on federal lands and waters," said **Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary - Land and Minerals Management Laura Daniel-Davis**. "Today's announcement brings us one step closer to making this a reality. The New York Bight can play a central role in fighting climate change, helping states achieve their renewable energy targets and help create thousands of jobs."

"The full environmental and economic benefits of offshore wind can only be realized if we, as a nation, come together to ensure all potential development is considered and advanced responsibly, with transparency, robust stakeholder and tribal engagement and scientific integrity guiding our every move forward," **BOEM Director Amanda Lefton**. "A central component to our success will be creating greater certainty for industry, state and local governments, tribal nations and stakeholders."

The goal of BOEM's Area Identification process is to identify the offshore locations that appear most suitable for wind energy development taking into consideration coexistence with ocean users. As part of this process, BOEM removed areas of highest conflict from consideration. BOEM received input from the public and other governmental agencies through the Call for Information and task force meetings as part of the process. The New York Bight WEAs are located in an area of shallow waters between Long Island (to the north and east) and the New Jersey coast (to the south and west). These areas have the potential to help states meet their offshore energy goals. Currently, BOEM has 16 active commercial wind energy leases off the Atlantic coast.

Today's announcement represents the culmination of a collaborative process between local, state and federal stakeholders and tribal governments to utilize the best available science to minimize ocean use conflicts.

BOEM will now prepare an environmental assessment (EA) to consider potential environmental consequences of site characterization activities (i.e., biological, archeological, geological, and geophysical surveys and core samples) and site assessment activities (i.e., installation of meteorological buoys) associated with issuing wind energy leases in the WEAs. The EA also considers project easements associated with each potential lease issued, and grants for subsea cable corridors in the New York Bight.

As part of this process, BOEM is seeking comments on considerations to be included in the EA. BOEM will use these comments in its scoping process and as input for its consultation under Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act and its implementing regulations. For more information on how to comment, please see: <https://www.boem.gov/renewable-energy/state-activities/new-york-bight>.

Additional information about the Wind Energy Areas and BOEM's commercial wind energy leasing efforts can be found on BOEM's website by clicking here: <https://www.boem.gov/renewable-energy/state-activities/new-york-bight>.